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*Sherri Sitzmann*  
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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

IN RE APPLICATION OF:  
Nelson, et al.

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DOCKET NO.: 56.0503

SERIAL NO.: 09/826,127

GROUP ART UNIT: 1712

FILED: April 4, 2001

TITLE: VISCOSITY REDUCTION OF  
VISCOELASTIC SURFACTANT BASED  
FLUIDS

EXAMINER: Tucker P,

**RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION MAILED OCTOBER 10, 2002**

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

**Status of the application**

Claims 1-26, 29, 33-35 and 37-50 are pending in the application. Claims 1-26, 29, 33-35, 37, 38  
and 42-50 are allowed. Claims 39 and 40 were rejected under 102(e) as being anticipated by  
Chang (6399546). Claims 41 was objected to as dependent upon a rejected case but otherwise  
allowable.

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**Amendments**

Please cancel claims 39 and 40 and amend claim 41 as follows:

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41. (Currently Amended) A method of treating a subterranean formation by injecting down a well an aqueous fluid comprising a thickening amount of a viscoelastic surfactant comprising providing a precursor of a breaking system, said breaking system comprising a carboxylic acid released from a precursor comprising a carboxylate anion, said released being performed after lowering of the pH of the viscoelastic surfactant fluid through hydrolysis of an ester and causing a reduction in viscosity of the fluid after its injection but does not significantly impact its viscosity at surface and during the injection.

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